## The Four Horsemen

## Document

## 1.1

From the *Book of Revelation*, Chapter 6 (KJV)

1And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

3And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

*The Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, depicted in a woodcut by [Albrecht Dürer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albrecht_D%C3%BCrer) (ca. 1497–98)

6And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure[[1]](#footnote-1) of wheat for a [day’s wages], and three measures of barley for a [day’s wages]; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

7And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

**Questions to Consider:**

1. Who were the Four Horsemen? What did each horse symbolize?
2. Why would this passage have been so popular in the fourteenth century? What historical developments convinced Europeans that they were experiencing the Apocalypse? (List as many as you can from the notes that you took over the summer)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Horse #1**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer**Events of 14th Century** | **Horse #2**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer**Events of 14th Century** |
| **Horse #3**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer**Events of 14th Century** | **Horse #4**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer**Events of 14th Century** |
| **Horse #1**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer: Pestilence**Events of 14th Century**1.1347-48 Black Death2. 1318 – Sheep infection3. Periodic return of Plague in summer months | **Horse #2**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer: War and Unrest**Events of 14th Century**1. 100 years war 1337-14532. Civil warsEngland – War of the Roses -1485 Wat Tyler & Peasan’ts Revolt 1381France – Jacques Bonhomme *Jacquerie* 13583.Unemployment encouraged people to turn to crime - attacks on nobles4. Statute of Labourers 1351 – cut wages4. Fur Collar Crime5. Challenges to the ChurchBabylonian Captivity & Great SchismWilliam of OccamMarsigilio of PaduaEngland - John Wyclif Prague - Jan HusLay Piety ( Confraternities) and MysticismHolland – The Bretheran Thomas a KempisBridget of Sweden6. Ethnic tensions - Jews attacked - Statute of Kilkenny 1366 (forbade marriage between English & Irish)7. Marital patterns led to Prostitution/Rape/Homosexuality “crimes against nature”8. Stronger gender divisions – Guilds were increasingly male  |
| **Horse #3**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer: Famine**Events of 14th Century**1. 1300 – Climate change “Little Ice Age”Unusual number of storms ruined crops -> starvation2. Great Famine 1315-13223. Prices rose even in non-famine years so fewer people could afford to buy food4. Reduced caloric intake = susceptibility to disease5. Workers on reduced diets has less energy = less production6. People lost homes – deserted villages -> vagabonds | **Horse #4**My Group’s answerTeacher’s answer: Deaths ( pop decline)**Events of 14th Century**1. Deaths through famine and starvation2. Disease – e.g. Black death3. Postponement of marriage led to reduced pop as fewer babies born. 4. Animals impacted also 1318 sheep infection – led to sharp decline of wool exports – weavers out of work. |

1. about a litre [↑](#footnote-ref-1)